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Poetry.

WITHOUT THE CHILDREN.

O the weary, solemn silence
Of a house without the children,
O the strange oppressive stillness
Where the children come no more!
Ah! the longing of the sleepless
For the soft arms of the children,
Ah! the longing for the faces
Peeping through the opening door—
Faces gone for evermore!

Strange it is to wake at midnight
And not hear the children breathing;
Nothing but the old clock ticking,
Ticking, ticking by the door,
Strange to see the little dresses
Hanging up there all the morning;
And the gutters—oh! their patter,
We will hear it never more
On our mirth forsaken floor.

What is home without the children?
'Tis the earth without its verdure,
And the sky without its sunshine:
Life is withered to the core!
So we'll leave this dreary desert,
And we'll follow the Good Shepherd
To the greener pastures vernal,
Where the lambs have "gone before"
With the Shepherd evermore!

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Of a house without the children,
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Miscellany.

THE MIDNIGHT ARREST.

AN EXILE'S STORY.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

I had spent some three months in the Austrian capital, dividing my time between the scientific lectures of one professor Coppitz, some curious experiments and inventions of my own, and the fair daughter of a colonel in my intended stay in Vienna, and the next day was to see me on my way to Paris and London, to be absent from my native country for an indefinite period. I had procured my passport, packed my trunks, settled my bills, and engaged my passage, and sitting up late, to finish a letter to Colonel Sabardine, to ask his consent to my subsequent marriage with his daughter, whose own conditional promise had already been obtained, when I was disagreeably interrupted by a loud knocking at the street door.—It was a period when crowned heads were filled with fearful suspicions of desperate plots for revolution and assassination, and innocent men were sometimes seized and hurried away in a mysterious manner, beyond the reach and knowledge of their friends, perhaps never to return to the world of life, and of course I felt anxious to know the meaning of this midnight call. In a few moments I heard voices, but could not distinguish words; then the door seemed to be opened, and there were sounds of armed men entering the dwelling, with a heavy measured tramp. There were several boarders in the house besides myself, and I remember wondering if either of these had been sent for by the authorities, and, if so, for what cause, and for what fate. I did not quit my room to exhibit my prying curiosity and court an arrest on suspicion, but, blowing out my light, so as not to attract attention, remained there very quietly, listening to every sound.

Presently I heard heavy steps coming up the stairs, and along the corridor that ran past my room; and then, greatly to my surprise and alarm, the voice of the landlord saying, as he appeared to stop in front of my door:

"It is here, sir; but I hope your honor don't think I know anything—"

"Silence, fool!" interrupted a gruff, stern voice; "and if you know when you're well off, keep your prating tongue between your teeth!"

Then came a heavy knock upon my door, as it struck angrily with the hilt of a sword. I sprang up and opened it. As the door swung back, I saw a group of six persons—four soldiers with fixed bayonets, and their pieces at a charge, directly in front of me—the pale and trembling landlord, only half-dressed, with a light in his hand, standing a

little behind them—and an officer, with a drawn sword close by his side.

Gustavus Kohlen! said the officer, in the tone of a man calling a military roll.

Your servant, sir! returned I, bowing respectfully.

In the name of the Emperor, we arrest you! Seize him guards! and if he resists shoot him down!

He had not done speaking when two soldiers, grasped me roughly on either side.

I pray you gentlemen, not to use violence, said I; for I assure you I will not make the least resistance!

Take him back into this room, strip and search him! commanded the officer.

This order was readily obeyed—my coat and other garments being almost torn from my person.

In one of my pockets was found a couple of letters, that I had just written and intended to post the next day; and, in another pistol, that I had prepared to take with me on my journey. These were immediately taken possession of by the officer, as also my watch, money and jewelry, including a seal-ring on one of my fingers—and in fact, everything about my person, my pockets being emptied for the purpose.

He then took up the unfinished letter to Colonel Sabardine, read a few lines, frowned darkly, put it carefully away in a side pocket, rummaged my escritoire, selected some important pen drawings of my inventions, together with other valuable papers and letters, looked at the desk and searched the room. He then ordered me to dress in haste, put two of his men in charge of the apartment, and hurried me down stairs, and out into the street, where some eight or ten soldiers were keeping guard upon the house in front, with as many more stationed in the rear.

I was now, I must confess, fearfully alarmed—for though I knew myself innocent of any crime, even so much as in thought, yet it did not follow that, in some unguarded manner, I might, either in speaking or writing, have made use of some expression that could be construed; and the fact that so many soldiers had been detailed to secure my arrest, seemed to prove that the government regarded me as a person of dangerous consequence.

A close carriage now drove up to the door, into which I was ordered, and in which the officers and two soldiers took their seats; when away we were whirled, through long, silent streets, apparently deserted by all save the watchful sentries stationed and there, whose peremptory challenges every now and then brought us to a dead halt.

"Might I humbly enquire of what I am accused?" I at length ventured to say to the officer having me in charge.

"Silence!" he commanded in his most stern and unsmiling tone. (When you are wanted to speak, you will be told!)"

Not another word was spoken till the carriage had passed through a massive gateway, under a low, dark arch, and stopped in the court of a second Bastille. Here I was transferred to the charge of a low-browed, black-whiskered, stiff-looking fellow, who, after a few words said with the officer, took me roughly by the arm, and conducted me through a small side door, in a long, dark, narrow, gloomy passage, that ran past a number of cells, and was dimly lighted here and there by an iron lamp, depending from the ceiling. After advancing along this passage for perhaps a hundred feet, we came to an iron door, which the turkey unlocked, and then lighting another iron lamp, which stood in a niche to the right, he conducted me down a long flight of stone steps, into a still more dark and gloomy passage. Passing along this for some fifty feet, the man stopped at a dungeon cell, numbered ninety-five, and unlocking and throwing open its outer and inner door, motioned me to enter.

"May I be permitted to ask a single question?" I now ventured to say.

"No, I'm not here to be talked to by such as you!" was his gruff and surly reply. In with you! he added, with a threatening jerk of his arm. "I've no time to waste on jerks!"

I obeyed, with a mental groan, feeling as if I were being condemned alive.

When the heavy doors were closed and locked upon me, I found myself in total darkness; and after standing for a few minutes, almost paralyzed with fear and dread, I commenced feeling around the damp, slimy walls to ascertain the size of the apartment and what it contained. This did not take me long, for the cell was only ten feet by six, and had nothing in it but some old, moist, mouldy straw, which had probably served the preceding occupant for a bed, and perhaps several others before him. I was not yet sufficiently exhausted to think of laying down upon this mass of filth—as I knew it must be, both by the sense of touch and smell—and so I felt out a spot near the door, that seemed to be the least disagreeable of any, and casting myself down there, *a la Turque*, I gave myself up to gloomy reflections.

Here was I, in the very prime and vigor of life—who for years had been a close, hard student, always minding my own business, and never meddling with what did not concern me, and, least of all, with the political affairs of a jealous and suspicious government—suddenly immured in a damp, dark, noisome dungeon, hardly fit for the worst malefactor, and without being publicly accused of any crime, or even myself permitted to know the cause of my arrest. In those first lonely, solitary hours, I endeavored to recall every act, incident, and expression of my whole life, that might, by any possibility be construed into treason—but I could not think of one. I had been innocent, even in thought; and I was finally forced to the conclusion, that I was either the victim of a mistake, or of some secret enemy—most probably the former, as I could remember no one to whom I had given offence. And yet the result might be entirely independent of my innocence, and I was made to suffer, along with the guilty, for even the misfortune of being suspected—such being, at that time, the too general administration of Austrian justice.

I passed the night in the painful manner I have described, and only knew when another day had dawned by a sort of misty gray that stole into my wretched dungeon, and, as it were, made the darkness visible. Soon after, the wicket of my cell was opened just wide enough for a human hand to thrust inside a small loaf of black bread and a jar of water, and then it closed, and I was left to an awful solitude for twenty-four hours.

Throughout that long, wretched day, I passed the time pacing my cell, in agony of mind impossible to portray; but when total darkness again shut in the scene, I threw myself down upon the damp filthy flags, in a state of complete exhaustion, and fell into a troubled sleep, which lasted through the night, when my allowance of bread and water was again handed in, in the same manner as at first.

I need not dwell upon the days of my imprisonment, which were all so much alike that a description of one will serve for all.

For weeks and months there was no change except in myself. I gradually became weak and emaciated, my hair and beard grew long and matted, my boots wore out, my garments got reduced to tatters, and my whole person became so covered with filth and vermin, that even the vilest tenants of a leazar-house might justifiably have shrunk from me in disgust. And what was worse still, I felt that my mind was progressively giving way under my cruel treatment, and I groaned and shuddered at the horrible thought of soon becoming a hopeless maniac. I tried to bear up like a man—tried to hope for the best—but the present was a disgusting mystery, and the future a wall of blackness, with no ray of light, no salient point, upon which to fix the mind; and so I found that, from every effort to rise from the Slough of Despond, I only sunk back deeper in the mire.

As the weather had been comparatively warm since my incarceration I had not suffered from the cold, only from the dampness and filth; but this, I believe, would in time breed some disease, and I ardently prayed that some fatal malady might seize me and send my spirit into a better world.

At last, one day, as I sat brooding over self-destruction, half tempted to put an end to my misery, either by opening an artery with my teeth, beating my brains out against the wall, or declining to take any more food, I heard the rattling of bolts and bars, saw the doors of my dungeon swing wide open, and heard a gruff voice say:

"Prisoner, come forth!"

I hastened to obey the welcome order, my poor heart taking a great bound with the hope of liberty.

The turkey shrunk back from me with a shudder of disgust, and ordered me to follow him. He led me first to a bath and bade me cleanse myself. It took me two hours to make myself passably human.

Then some coarse but clean garments were given me; and when I had put them on, I felt, in the wondrous change, as if I had been transformed from a beggar to a prince.

Two officers, in undress uniforms, with side-arms, now appeared and took charge of me. They conducted me up to the world of light, which at first so dazzled my eyes that I was obliged to shade them with my hand.

Through long passages and corridors, up a second flight of stairs, and through different apartments, with heavy doors opening with a rattle and a creak and flanging heavily behind us, they escorted me, without a word being spoken; till at last we entered a small room, divided by a high, carved railing, behind which sat three austere-looking men, in powdered wigs and black gowns.

"Gustavus Kohlen," said the presiding judge, in a slow, measured tone, "taking up a sealed document, 'you are here to listen to your sentence.'"

"By order of his Imperial Majesty," he proceeded, "you are now and forever banished

from this realm, and all your property made confiscate to the Crown! If again found within the Imperial dominions, the penalty is death! Officers restore your prisoner, and see him safely escorted beyond the frontier!"

I humbly bowed to the tyrannical sentence, feeling more joy in my heart at the thought of regaining my freedom, even with the loss of my property, than words can ever make known.

In less than an hour I was leaving Vienna by government express; and day and night was I whirled onward, till I found myself a glorious freeman on the welcome soil of Bavaria, which for a time became my home.

Of what I was accused I never knew, nor by what right, except that of night, my property was taken from me. Fortunately, I had no family to regret my loss; and though placed in a strange land, without money or friends, I had that within which assured me the future would not be one of gloom and despair.

I wrote several letters to the fair girl to whom I had offered my hand, but never received any answer, nor do I know whether she is living or dead.

From Bavaria I went to France; and in Paris I perfected my invention, for which I realized a large sum. With this I removed to the United States, of which glorious country I am proud to say I am now a citizen. I am surrounded by a happy family; and while the starry banner floats above me, I have the assurance, thank God! that no tyrant's nod can consign me or mine to a living tomb!

One Criminal Clears Another.

A highwayman that some years ago robbed three gentlemen, who were travelling together in a stage coach, was, soon after, upon strong evidence, arrested as the person who had committed the robbery, and sent to jail, where, dreading his approaching fate, he grew very pensive. A fellow prisoner noticing his extreme dejection, said to him:

How now, friend, why do you continually wear that cloud upon your brow? To which the poor fellow replied, "that expectation of the gallows was enough to make any man look sorrowful!" "Sho!" said the other, "if that is all, cheer up, man; if you will pay me handsomely, I will get you off." "I thank you, friend," he replied, "but that is impossible; the proof is too strong against me; nor do I think I can have impudence enough even to deny the facts," (for he was not a hardened villain, this being his first crime.) "Well," replied the other, "if you have not the courage to deny it, I have nothing more to say to you." He then requested to know by what means he hoped to save his life. "No, no," returned the other, "my secret I will not divulge; but no care no pay. If you will agree to reward me I will engage to get you off; and if my scheme should miscarry, you can but be hanged at last, you know." "I have two hundred pounds," said the robber, "one hundred of which, if you save my life shall be yours."

"Agreed," said the other, "and now all you have to do is, to tell me every particular word, &c., that passed at the time you committed the robbery; and when you are brought to the bar, plead not guilty, and leave the rest to me." Then the highwayman related every word and circumstance that he could recollect as having passed between the gentleman and himself.

At the assizes, when the robber was brought to trial, he pleaded not guilty.—Just at this time there was heard a great bustle among the prisoners, which being loud enough to disturb the court, the jail-keeper was called upon to explain the disturbance; who reported that one of the prisoners said he had something of the utmost importance to say to the judge, who immediately ordered him to the bar, and asked him why he disturbed the court. He then assumed a piteous countenance, told his lordship that, though he had been a wicked fellow, his conscience would not permit him to let an innocent man suffer for a crime that he himself had committed. Upon which the gentleman who were the prosecutors seemed greatly disconcerted. He then addressed himself to them and repeated every word that had passed between them at the time he had robbed them; and had the impudence to exhort them to care for the future, how they swore away an innocent man's life. The gentlemen stood reproved. On his avowal of his crime, the real culprit was acquitted, and the other remanded back to prison till a bill of indictment was found against him. The real criminal was punctual to his promise to his preserver, and then made off with full speed.

When the supposed culprit's trial came on, and he was at the bar, to the astonishment of the whole Court, he pleaded—Not guilty! for which he was severely reproved by the judge, who asked how he dare have the effrontery to deny a fact to which he pleaded guilty at the bar. To which he, with great composure, replied, that he had

not only denied the fact, but could immovably prove his innocence, not only to the satisfaction of his lordship, but of the whole court; adding that he could prove an *alibi* at the time of the robbery. "How will you prove this?" said the judge. Your honor shall prove it for me—if your lordship will be pleased to order him to look over his list of prisoners, he will find that I was in prison at the time of the robbery was committed."

On the greaser's examining his books, he found to his small satisfaction, that this fellow was brought into prison the day before the robbery was committed. For his neglect in not examining his books he was very near losing his position.

Siege of Richmond.

The Richmond Examiner of a recent date, his off the comments of the Federal press in the following ironical manner:

The citizens did not believe a word of it. They doubt even the existence of Grant's army. Let Grant prove it. Here is Richmond waiting to be taken; built evidently to be taken; predestined to be taken, rebuffed, and burned, according to very high authorities. And it is clear also, that the whole heart of the great and mighty nation, of all the mighty nations the mightiest, and the best, has been set upon this achievement, as its highest business, and holiest mission upon earth. And there are not wanting eager, eloquent, valuable writers, for the noble press of that same people, most enlightened press of all creation, protesting, affirming, and almost swearing, that large and numerous bodies of persons in uniform, wearing buttons, carrying weapons, in fact, what Yankees call armies, were most certainly coming this way on the errand aforesaid; and that Richmond was to consider herself besieged, or for that matter, as good as taken. There is a very general incredulity about this whole matter. Perhaps it is because we are now so used to Yankee lying as to set down any thing false because they say it, or perhaps it is that our citizens have heretofore read in books about besieged cities, and the impression that in such cases people could not go in or out, meat or vegetables could not come to market from the country, and no matter how tempting the summer weather, family parties could not make pic-nics to the rural districts. And finding none of these conditions in the present situation, they say that there is no siege.

They surmise that the whole story of the vast hosts, and this investment of a city, and bloody arbitrament of the great world conflict of the age, must have been got up to amuse or delude a Convention now said to be assembled at Baltimore. And they begin generously to doubt whether it is indeed true, or was true a few days ago, that some of the largest armies ever embattled upon earth were advancing with a celerity never before known to decide the destinies of a continent in our streets, and seal the grand charter of her man-freedom in flame and blood, amid the conflagration of our crashing dwellings, and the murderous shrieks of a hundred thousand souls. They say "Booh." Say there has been no such battle in hand at all. Let Grant prove it. If he has any army let him produce it; let him prove his own existence to begin with. Richmond is open to correction, and is tired of waiting to be taken. It is rather a drowsy affair, this life in a besieged city. Richmond is in danger of falling asleep upon her seven hills, in this still and sultry atmosphere. We can conceive of a certain lazy somnolence which seems cruel in our people."

The Nassau correspondent of the London Index states that out 425 attempts to ruin the blockade from that port alone, 383 have been successful.

A man named Simeon Curtis, of East Bridgewater, Mass., weighing three hundred and fifty pounds, broke through the floor of his house recently, and died two days afterwards.

A new species of silk worm, living on the oak, has just been introduced into France. It is the *Bombyx Kayles*, and is a native of the table islands on the Himalays, on the frontiers of Cashmere.

A frightful accident happened at a mill in Gomersel, Eng., not long since, from the prevailing rage of crinoline. The skirts of a poor mill girl were caught by a revolving shaft, and in an instant she was hurled round, and was picked up a mangled corpse.

In spite of the strenuous opposition on the part of clergy to M. Renna and all his works, it is said that he is about to resume his chair in the College of France on condition of confining his lectures to the Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Job, Esther, and other typical secondary historical books of the Old Testament. Sixty thousand copies of the cheap edition of his "Life of Jesus" have been sold, and the demand for it is as rampant as ever.